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[From the Washington Times, July 20, 2001]

CHENEY AIMS TO DRILL AFAR AND WIDE

(By David R. Sands)

Debates over drilling at home have dominated the headlines, but the Bush administration's energy plan also calls for some aggressive prospecting in overseas markets as well.

Kazakhstan, Russia, India and even Venezuela stand to be big winners under key sections of the energy program, released by a task force headed by Vice President Richard B. Cheney on May 18.

Energy needs would assume a much greater role in considering whether to apply economic or other sanctions against unfriendly governments.

"There's a lot going on, on the international side in that report, and it's going to matter a lot to the entire global energy market," said Robert E. Ebel, director of the energy and national security program at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

"The path the U.S. chooses on production and consumption will have a huge impact on the rest of the world," Mr. Ebel said.

The Bush plan calls for a major diversification of oil suppliers, away from the long-standing reliance on unstable or unfriendly Middle Eastern producers.

"Concentration of world oil production in any one region of the world is a potential contributor to market instability, benefiting neither oil producers nor consumers," the report said.

A survey released by the American Petroleum Institute (API) on Wednesday could boost the Bush plan, which faces a tough time in Congress.

The oil industry trade group found that U.S. crude oil imports for the first half of 2001 hit a record average of 60 percent of total demand, or 9.2 million barrels per day. Oil imports in April accounted for 62.8 percent of total demand, "the largest (monthly) share in history," API said.

Officials in the Central Asian country of Kazakhstan have expressed satisfaction with the Bush administration's focus on their market, where recent oil field discoveries have attracted intense industry interest.

"The new administration has showed a very complete and mutual understanding of the cooperation we hope to have in the future," Vladimir Shkolnik, Kazakhstan's vice minister for energy and natural resources, said in an interview during a Washington trip this spring.

"I get the feeling they understand very well our potential," Mr. Shkolnik said.

While saying private investors must lead the way, the Cheney report devotes considerable time to the Kazakh market, urging U.S. government agencies to "deepen their commercial dialogue" with Kazakhstan.

The report also endorses the proposed pipeline from Baku, Azerbaijan, through Georgia to the Turkish port of Ceyhan. Enthusiasti-

cally backed by the Clinton administration, the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline has been resisted by Moscow, which sees the project as an effort to bypass Russia.

"The big question has always been how to get the oil and gas to market. With private companies like (British Petroleum) really pushing the pipeline, it's hard to see how the Bush administration could do a 180-degree turn from what the Clinton people were recommending," Mr. Ebel said.

To complete the bypass of both Russia and Iran, the Cheney report's authors called for the State Department to push for Greece and Turkey to link their gas pipeline systems, allowing even easier access to European markets for Caspian gas.

But Russia is also one of several other international producers that the Cheney task force recommends should be encouraged. Russia has about 5 percent of the world's proven oil reserves and a third of the world's natural gas, but needs major Western investment and significant legal and commercial reforms to exploit its potential.

While urging continued pressure on Middle East suppliers like Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to open their markets to foreign investors, the Bush administration blueprint seeks suppliers much farther afield.

Despite a series of sharp political and diplomatic exchanges with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, the United States should push to conclude a bilateral investment treaty with Caracas, said the administration proposal, and begin talks with Brazil to boost "energy investment flows" with both of the South American powers.

The report also directs U.S. agencies to help India "maximize its domestic oil and gas production," as well. One foreign policy recommendation that has taken some hits is the Bush proposal to include "energy security" as a factor when considering the usefulness of economic sanctions.

The administration was forced to retreat in the first congressional fight over such sanctions, in the face of strong bipartisan support for maintaining current restrictions on trade and investment with Iran and Libya.

HONORING DOCTOR PAUL ERRERA ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 25, 2001

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who gathered today to pay tribute to Doctor Paul Errera as he celebrates his retirement from service with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Dr. Errera began his forty-seven year career with the VA as a first year resident in psychiatry at the West Haven, Connecticut VA Medical Center. He later went on to serve as the Chief of Psychiatry for fifteen years. In addition to his work in Connecticut, Dr. Errera spent nearly a decade in Washington, D.C. as the national Director of Psychiatry and Psychological Services. In that role, he was charged with the oversight of 172 VA hospitals across the country. In a career that has spanned nearly half a century, Dr. Errera has

demonstrated a unique commitment to our nation's veterans and the quality of care they receive.

Throughout his tenure, Dr. Errera has been a visionary leader, stimulating fundamental change in the way mental health care is delivered. He has played an integral role in the development and implementation of innovative, community-based programs to meet the diverse mental health treatment needs of veterans. Dr. Errera's commitment and diligence has had a dramatic impact on the VA's treatment of its mentally ill patients—effectively changing the face of their approach and service to many of our nation's most vulnerable citizens.

Dr. Errera attributes his dedication to the historic role the United States played in twice freeing his homeland of Belgium—believing that the citizens of Belgium owe a great debt to the brave men and women who liberated his native country. I have often spoke of our nation's need to provide the best possible care to our veterans. These are the men and women who fought for the freedoms and values we hold so dear. Dr. Errera, with his unparalleled record of service to the veterans of this country, has set a new standard for us all to strive to achieve.

Dr. Errera, through his infinite good work has made a real difference in the lives of many US veterans and for that we owe him a great debt of gratitude. It is my great honor to rise today to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to Dr. Paul Errera for his outstanding service at the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and my very best wishes to him and his family for many more years of health and happiness.

ILSA EXTENSION ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 24, 2001

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, as a proud cosponsor of this well crafted legislation, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1954, the Iran Libya Extensions Act of 2001.

When this law was first enacted by the United States Congress in 1996 it imposed a number of economic sanctions against foreign companies that invest in the energy sectors of either Iran or Libya. Given those two nation's support for violence and terrorism, the bill passed overwhelmingly.

Unfortunately, nothing in those nations' behavior has changed since that bill passed unanimously by a vote of 415-0. Therefore, we must pass this bill to extend the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) for an additional five years.

As recently as March 13, 2001, President George W. Bush issued a statement declaring that Iran's government is, "a threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States"—due to—"its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them."